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A Whole New Kind of ROI

Introducing a magazine for senior execs who see technology in business terms

AT COMPUTERWORLD, WE KNOW THIS to be true: The bottom line is what ultimately matters. It matters not only to the CEO, but also to the other senior executives at your company, whether they represent finance, operations, sales, marketing or information technology.

The bottom line means more than just a balance sheet, especially when it comes to IT. The measure of technology's true return on investment has always been a slippery metric, one that defies traditional business measures of profit and loss. No one has found the perfect formula to apply. But the right technology choices can transform your business, just as the wrong ones can send it into a death spiral. That drama is playing out today on the dot-com stage, where a new kind of ROI is cutting its teeth. And it won't stop at the edges of e-business.

You know that intelligent, strategic use of IT can be the single biggest differentiator today for a thriving business in a world being reshaped by the Internet economy. IT is deeply embedded in every critical business process today, from back-office systems that support high-volume online transactions, to wireless communication that boosts the productivity of a sales force — to outsourcing choices that may put your customers, data and ability to deliver at risk.

ComputerworldROI is written for you — the senior executive who *gets* IT. You see the intrinsic value of technology, but you view it in business terms whether you're the CEO, the chief e-commerce officer, the chief operating officer, or the CIO. You already have people who understand the inner workings of your company's key technologies. Implemention details don't intrigue you. Results get your attention.

That's what you'll find in the pages of *ComputerworldROI*. Clearly presented, jargon-free expertise. Specific strategies for e-business and just plain business. Actionable ideas from your peers. Information to apply immediately, to broaden your understanding of how technology can deliver results. Every story, every business case study, every expert opinion column and every piece of information will focus on technology payback.

Not long ago, we wrote about Bruce Barnes, the CIO of Nationwide Insurance, who lopped 40% off his company's six-figure IT research costs. He did it by sitting his three main providers — Gartner Group, Meta Group and Forrester Research — down at the same table and telling them to collaborate or get lost. The vendors huffed and puffed, of course, but they all complied. "In many ways, they all sell the same stuff, so they overlap like crazy," Barnes said.

That's bottom line thinking about technology. That's a whole new kind of ROI. —**MARYFRAN JOHNSON**

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TOP LINE

Thought leadership
is the real goal

team spirit

E-Boot Camp

ROUND TABLE GROUP INC. (WWW.ROUND.table.com), an international consortium of consulting professors, recently announced the launch of its "E-Commerce Boot camp" executive seminar series. The 11 one- and two-day long symposia, each featuring a team of academic thought leaders and keynote speakers, are designed for executives and senior managers at established firms who have an urgent need to craft and hone their firm's e-business strategy. The all-star academic cast includes Hal Varian of Berkeley's School of Information Management and Erik Brynjolfsson of MIT's Sloan School of Management. Each bootcamp also has a Web-based community that rebroadcasts the session via streaming video. "This boot camp is a great place to dream up some digital innovation strategies," Varian said. "For example, Southwest Airlines, a leading low-fare airline, aggressively implemented such strategies, which led to it capturing more than 25% of passenger revenues through its Internet site.

calculating interest

E-Banking Sanity Check

MULTINATIONALS CONTINUE TO BE SKEPtical about banks' e-commerce offerings, according to "Corporate E-Commerce after the Euro: The Challenge for Banks," a joint report by the Economist Intelligence Unit and the global management consultancy A .T. Kearney. The report reveals that multinational corporations intend to use fewer banks and will increasingly turn to non-banking technology providers.

Why? Because they say banks accommodate change by "tacking new solutions onto old ideas."

"Corporations doubt that banks can provide pan-European solutions because their structures tend to be country based. Although most banks operate across the globe, they seldom display the characteristics of a truly global business," says Jackie Wiles, from an EIU official.

To be able to compete effectively, the report shows that banks must radically reinvent themselves. To succeed in the new business environment, banks must not just compare themselves with their traditional banking rivals, but also with the new providers of e-commerce technology and services.

PHOTOGRAPH: ANNE HAMERSKY, ILLUSTRATION: FRANCISCO CACERES

Hyatt offers high-speed hook-up

on the road (again)
High Speed Room Service

FRUSTRATED BY SLOW DIAL-UP INTERNET connections while on the road? Hotels have noticed and are racing to install broadband service in guest rooms, according to a survey by Cahners In-Stat Group. "With hotel chains struggling to differentiate themselves, broadband access will be a terrific benefit to the haves and an enormous detriment to the have-nots," says In-Stat analyst Amy Helland. About 48% of hotels surveyed by In-Stat plan to implement broadband in the next 12 months.

The fees for hotel room broadband service will vary — with some chains using a per-night charge, some using a per-minute charge and some using a flat rate per stay. Many hotels are also planning to deploy broadband in conference rooms, which allows service providers to peddle value-added services such as virtual private networking and e-commerce.

Meanwhile, the Hyatt hotel chain is pilot-testing "comcierges" in its deluxe properties — staff members who assist business travelers with computer problems. Ultimately, computer assistance could become a mandatory customer service requirement in hotels, aircraft, etc. as mobile computing becomes pervasive.

talking head

"Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler"
—ALBERT EINSTEIN

E-Business Imperatives

1 Don't plan more than 24 months out. Why bother?

2 Use separate e-business strategies by industry, business unit and geography.

3 Give equal weight to internal and external processes.

4 Obtain total buy-in from the board.

5 Transform your business with a spin-off or acquisition.

6 Play by the new Web Economy rules.

7 Re-evaluate your distribution channels based on their value and ability to adapt.

8 Cut off the weak links, regardless of the short-term pain.

9 Influence everything but don't try to control it all.

10 Speed and ruthless execution are key to success.

SPINNING THE STREET

BY PIMM FOX

Just Give Me the Goods

Let's get to the point. Do we really need all that marketing?

I WISH I KNEW JEFF BEZOS, THE HEAD OF Amazon.com. That way I could tell him face-to-face that I do not own a dog. Or a cat. Or any other living thing, except maybe some wind-blown (but fully flowering) Mexican sage and English lavender that sits overlooking San Francisco Bay.

So, Jeff. What's with all the marketing for Pets.com?

I know all the reasons for the tie-in. I understand that you've got this great database of names and profiles. And I guess you have enough money in the piggy bank to pay the post office. Which reminds me. You must be one of the post office's best customers. Why don't you tell the post office to give away e-mail addresses to every person in the country that wants one?

But seriously, Jeff. Your cross marketing is annoying me. In fact, so far the book marks I receive stuffed inside my boxes of books never really work as well as either a scrap of newspaper, such as the review of the book itself, or the dust jacket that easily does the job.

Your Post-it notes were OK, and I admit to having used one or two, but they don't do the trick.

So here's what I suggest. Stick a sheet of stamps in the box. Encourage me to write letters, poems and wild thoughts to friends and family. Give me the tools to express myself, to discover the joy of reading (are you listening Hillary Clinton?) or of amassing a silly collection of Beethoven Middle Quartets.

In effect Jeff, stop the marketing and just let me have the goods. The more e-retailers try and get it right, the more they try to get inside my head, and it isn't a pleasant experience.

We are all overwhelmed with excessive marketing and cyber come-ons these days. Enough is enough.

With a market capitalization of $19 billion and sales of $2.8 billion, along with 7,600 employees (that's an increase of 400 since last quarter), you'd think Amazon could take a break. Analysts now believe that the company is capital self-sufficient (they have plugged a small hole in the leaking ship) and will be profitable by the fourth quarter of next year.

If sending me coupons for other Amazon businesses is what it takes for Jeff to finally make it out of the red, well I guess I can wait fast. I don't want to have to get a dog. I don't want to have to get a dog. **ROI**

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SPLIT
RESPONSIBILITY

As CIOs become more immersed in business management, some are handing off technical oversight to CTOs. But splitting responsibilities between the two roles can be tricky. **BY GARY H. ANTHES**

N EW ESTATE LIFE INSURANCE CO. WENT through four CIOs in eight years. Then, it found Jennifer Caudrell, who had something the others didn't — a business background.

"The others were technologists," says Caudrell, who arrived at the insurance company in 1997 with 17 years of retail banking experience, including a stint at The PLLC Finance Group Inc. in Philadelphia, where she worked on projects to develop a call center and automated teller machine and home banking services. "Their lack of knowledge of what to do on the business side was part of their downfall," she says.

Nevertheless, Caudrell recognized that New Estate Life needed a strong technical leader, created the position of chief technology officer (CTO) and hired Paul Marron to fill it. Marron, whom Caudrell lured from PLLC, has three responsibilities at the insurance company, Caudrell says: "building the IT infrastructure, managing Internet development and chief strategist for emerging technologies."

As CIOs increasingly take seats at the business management table, some are handing off oversight of technical areas to CTOs. Sometimes the CTO is hired at the same level as the CIO. Other times, he is hired by and reports to the CIO. In either case, the CTO is expected to tend to long-term development of the information technology infrastructure and often to oversee computer and network operations.

"The trend is definitely toward adding CTOs," says John Capelli, president of IT management consultancy Capelli and Associates in Phoenix. Technology is changing so fast, he says, that companies need a senior person who can focus on it full time and free up the CIO to focus on business-related issues. "The way I think of it is that the CTO's job is passion for the product, and the CIO's job is passion for the customer," says Capelli.

"At many of the smartest companies we know, the CIO represents efforts to keep IT aligned with the business goals, while the CTO is the point person for making sure the IT infrastructure is sound and able to keep pace with the demands of the business," says Michael Adams, an analyst at CXO Ventures Group Inc., a management consultancy in West Tisbury, N.Y.

A company that can't afford to establish a new, senior position for a CTO "should look to grow a current team member into CTO status," he says.

Balancing roles requires a "continuing negotiation" as business needs evolve

Ed Hamlin is CIO at Pittsburgh Life Mutual Insurance Co. in Chester, Pa., where he has worked for nearly 30 years. In the early 1970s, he recalls, "I had a couple of mainframe systems programmers working for me. That was the chief technology function at the time." It wasn't until the late '80s, when distributed processing came on the scene, that IT became complex and fast-changing enough to justify establishing a full-time CTO position, he says.

Like many CIOs who have come up through the technical ranks, Hamlin has shifted his focus to the business side — including cementing relationships with external customers. For technological strategy and building the insurer's long-term IT infrastructure, he relies on his CTO, Peter Rasher, who stepped into that position in 1990.

PHOTOGRAPH BY DARRYL ESTRINE

Rasher has a colleague at his level whom he likens to a "mini-CIO," the person who manages application development. Splitting responsibilities isn't always easy, Rasher says". It's kind of a continuing negotiation. It's sometimes hard to draw the line where long-term architecture takes precedence over application or business needs."

But Rasher is an exception among CTOs, Capelli says. Most CTOs rise through the ranks of systems programmers and other technicians. "Everyone in the company knows who they are. They are the technical gurus. The cream rises to the top."

But management skills don't hurt, Capelli adds. He says CTOs should spend half their time on long-term strategic planning and half on short-term oversight of key projects. He cites a Midwestern bank where the CTO devoted much of his time to ensuring that a crucial electronic banking project stayed on track.   ROI

Deconstr
DaimlerChrys

DaimlerChrysler wants to be more than your car company.
The automaker is gearing up to offer Internet services,
mortgages, satellite-based services and supplies online.
Has the board of directors lost its mind? **BY JULIA KING**

DAIMLERCHRYSLER AG WANTS TO BE MORE THAN YOUR CAR COMPANY. Much more. ¶ Think real-time stock quotes, talking e-mail messages and video games — all delivered at the dashboard. ¶ Think satellite-based radio services, online car financing and home mortgages. ¶ Think of a multibillion-dollar online trading exchange that reaches beyond carmakers and parts suppliers to hundreds of thousands of other businesses around the globe. ¶ These are just a few of the strategic businesses in which Chrysler is making huge information technology investments. The goal is nothing short of transforming the auto giant into a leading provider of Internet-based information services whose recurring revenue potential rivals the $176.6 billion Chrysler piled up last year making and selling 8.5 million cars and trucks. ¶ "Clearly, services will become a larger part of our revenues, and the services dictate how you build and support vehicles," said Ron Sullivan, the auto giant's CIO and architect of its Internet strategy.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHAEL GRECCO

ucting
ler

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SANTA MONICA

"If we don't take those revenues, someone else will," he added. Virtually all of Chrysler's electronic business initiatives center on leveraging two extremely potent forces: leading-edge

Inc., are working full time on TradeXchange, which the partners plan to spin off as a separate company by year's end.

"The exchange will be much more than a purchasing exchange," said George

exact makes and models of cars that consumers are eyeing on dozens of DaimlerChrysler and non-DaimlerChrysler Web sites. This is a key element in transitioning DaimlerChrysler's suppliers to a "sense and respond" mode of inventory replenishment, which will bring DaimlerChrysler a big step closer to its ultimate goal of electronically executing the entire order-to-delivery process by 2003. If DaimlerChrysler succeeds, Goldman, Sachs & Co. predicts, it will shave $3,700 from the cost of every car it produces.

DaimlerChrysler is **investing $1.6 billion** in various e-business initiatives. Offering **'net connectivity** in automobiles is **only the first step**.

Internet technologies and the automaker's gargantuan presence in both consumer and supplier markets. TradeXchange, the company's joint online marketplace initiative with Ford Motor Co. and General Motors Corp., is a prime example.

So far, Chrysler has invested $600 million in the exchange, through which it plans to purchase all of the materials it uses in manufacturing — about $87 billion annually — from 30,000 suppliers.

But that's just the beginning. DaimlerChrysler is also opening up the exchange to parts buyers at companies in other industries, including Sony Corp. and IBM. Eventually, it will also include DaimlerChrysler's 7,000 North American dealerships, which, among other things, will be able to buy their cleaning and office supplies plus host online auctions of used cars through the exchange.

DaimlerChrysler is also looking to integrate goods and services of other online exchanges in related industries, such as those of E-Steel Corp. and MetalSite LP in the metals industry, plus offer outsourced software services for logistics, transportation planning and supply-chain management, all of which would generate additional and recurring revenue.

A total of 150 people from the automakers and their technology partners, Oracle Corp. and Commerce One

Mason, DaimlerChrysler's group vice president of worldwide purchasing.

It will also serve as a critical information portal where DaimlerChrysler's suppliers retrieve real-time plant production schedules, inventory data plus never-before-available data about the

The Numbers Talk

$3.2B
The automaker's annual IT budget

$87B
Annual expenditure on parts

$600M
Projected investment in TradeXchange

$50B
Projected value of TradeXchange transactions by end of next year

$1.6B
Investment in e-business to date

Other analysts say that figure is too high. "A Web-based infrastructure that integrates activities is important (because) now, manufacturing makes, engineering designs and purchasing works with suppliers," said Hiro Mori, an analyst at Automotive Consulting Group Inc. in Ann Arbor, Mich.

"If they improve efficiencies between functional groups, it's going to have a big effect on costs. Not $3,700, but significant savings," he said.

DaimlerChrysler's Sullivan said he agrees with that. "The company that links design, procurement and sales — and puts it all together electronically — wins."

Overall, Sullivan estimates that DaimlerChrysler has invested about $1.6 billion in its various electronic-business initiatives, which in turn have reduced the company's annual IT budget by about $800 million each year since 1996. (The reductions have come from retiring legacy applications and streamlining business processes and systems.) The company's 2000 IT budget is $3.2 billion.

Once it makes and sells a car, DaimlerChrysler will extend its revenue-earning power by delivering Internet-based services through its OnStar system to drivers of Web-ready cars.

"This fall, DaimlerChrysler will be

the first carmaker to offer Internet connectivity in the vehicle," said Anthony Rodin, head of DaimlerChrysler's e-DaimlerChrysler unit, which functions as the company's headquarters for all consumer-oriented electronic-business initiatives.

From there, Rodin envisions services including customized stock reports, MP3 music downloads and individually programmed satellite radio services, and not just to drivers of top-of-the-line models or the 1 million OnStar subscribers DaimlerChrysler will have signed up by year's end. By the end of next year, Internet connectivity will be standard on DaimlerChrysler's midsize models as well.

In addition, DaimlerChrysler has a deal with Bell Atlantic Corp. to provide hands-free, voice-activated Internet service to cars anywhere in the U.S. The automaker also is in the process of forging partnerships with various content providers, said Charles Trebbiano, general manager, of DaimlerChrysler's OnStar unit.

"DaimlerChrysler has supported us in making this business as big as we can as fast as we can," Trebbiano said. That includes selling the OnStar technology to competing carmakers — another key ingredient in DaimlerChrysler's electronic-business strategy.

Because of its OnStar technology, Trebbiano estimated that Daimler-Chrysler now has about an 18- to 24-month lead in Internet connectivity over other automakers.

"But as DaimlerChrysler rolls these vehicles out, other manufacturers will do the same," he noted. It makes sense for DaimlerChrysler to take advantage of its lead by selling the technology, then collecting subscription revenue on an ongoing basis, said Trebbiano. **ROI**

Coaching for the Net

MOVE TO E-DAIMLERCHRYSLER STRATEGY REQUIRES 'CAR GUYS' TO BECOME 'tech guys' Two years ago, George Mason, group vice president of worldwide purchasing at DaimlerChrysler AG., had never even popped the cover off a laptop computer.

Today, he carries one wherever he goes. He buys his golf clubs and tracks the stock market online and is a regular groupie on certain Internet sites.

"I love to go on eBay and watch auctions or to Fulton Fish Market online," Mason said.

Anthony Rodin, another longtime DaimlerChrysler executive who heads the automaker's 9-month-old Internet commerce unit, is a self-described "car guy" more than a tech guy. But, thanks in part to the help of a "personal technology coach," Rodin is also now a proficient user of a PC and the Internet.

Like all senior executives at Detroit-based Daimler, Rodin and Mason rely almost exclusively on both tools throughout the course of their daily work, meetings and travel.

They have to, according to CIO Ron Sullivan. "It's not just about selling cars and trucks anymore," Sullivan said.
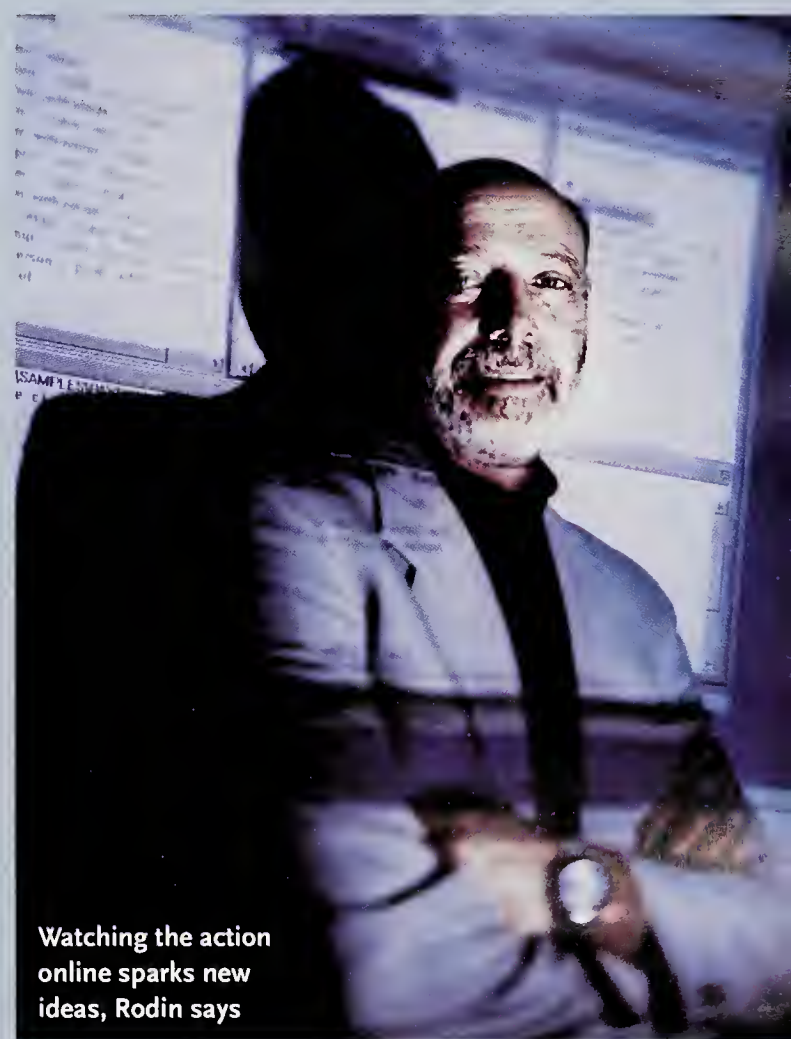
Even Sullivan has a personal technology coach — a 28-year-old employee of Compaq Computer Corp., a key supplier of desktop technology to the automaker.

Watching the action online sparks new ideas, Rodin says

"I'm supposed to be CIO of the world's largest company, but I didn't grow up with the Internet," Sullivan said.

Like all executives, Sullivan dedicates at least an hour each week to being coached in new Internet technologies.

Indeed, if Daimler is to successfully transform itself from purely a car and truck company to a provider of information services, its executives must be technology-savvy. Sullivan, Daimler's chief Internet strategist, has helped get them there by "wrapping technology around them wherever possible."

The personal technology coaches were just the beginning. All of Daimler's major divisions now have their own CIOs, all seasoned technology executives whom Sullivan personally recruited from other industries. Sullivan himself came to Daimler, as its first CIO, from Bell Atlantic Corp. in 1996.

Time Out FO

ELECTRONIC MARKETS, OR BUSINESS-TO-BUSINESS EXCHANGES FOR SELLING GOODS AND SERVICES online, have been exploding in number during the past several months. Hundreds have been launched to support players in the automotive, chemicals, retail and other industries, with an eye toward using their collective buying clout to get supplies more cheaply and quickly. Suppliers, too, stand to save money via the streamlined, all-electronic procurement process.

But despite the promises e-markets offer, they face major obstacles before they can be branded successful.

Electronic markets and business-to-business exchanges may be proliferating, but few of them are profitable. The ones who succeed must sidestep legal potholes.

Among the obstacles are having information technology staffs stuck in megaproject mode for e-market rollouts more akin to giant enterprise resource planning (ERP) system efforts, inducing suppliers to use the exchanges and working through big technology integration issues with all members of the exchange. Then there are potentially big legal potholes — namely, antitrust violations — that experts say may be inherent in doing this sort of business online. Overall, e-markets are generating more questions than transactions right now.

"We're definitely at the stage in this whole thing that people keep inventing as they move along. And some are better inventors than others," says Wim Roentgen, president of Roentgen Vision Inc., a San Jose-based researcher.

Obsolete approaches to IT are also stalling many e-markets, says Kevin Benson, managing partner of the digital markets practice at Arthur Andersen LLP in New York. "Landing three busloads of consultants in a building and setting them up for two years is not a winning proposition," he says. "This isn't ERP." IT managers, he says, should instead plan short, intense project bursts of just a few months, tops.

That's the way it worked at FuelCorp Inc., a Portland-based petroleum exchange. The company chose software — mainly from Oracle Corp. — and didn't look back, says Bob Johnston, president and CEO of FuelCorp, which went live Aug. 1, 1999.

FuelCorp is aimed at marketers of gas and other fuels — companies that, for example, deliver to gas stations and such big commercial users as Dow Chemical Co. At FuelCorp, petroleum marketers will be able to order fuel, arrange delivery and take care of electronic invoicing and other logistics. Fifteen companies have signed up so far.

R E-Markets?

Before joining FuelCorp in Statton, Vt., Johnston founded a company called The Tommard Group, which installed technology for investment bankers. He also did an IT management stint at Xerox Corp. and helped rebuild the mission control system at NASA.

That kind of heavy-duty technology background is something many e-market CEOs don't have but need, says Chris Smith, an analyst at International Data Corp. in Framingham, Mass.

BY KIM S. NASH

"A lot of the marketplaces out there now are leaning on the content side, but that won't get them far," Smith says.

For example, ManufacturingCentral.net, which is overseen by the National Association of Manufacturers, a trade group in Washington, doesn't conduct transactions yet; it's in the middle of installing the technology infrastructure to do so. Active buying and selling is expected late this year. In the meantime, it provides industry news and community chat space.

Another problem for owners and operators of e-markets is muscling suppliers onto the exchange. Small and midsize suppliers, in particular, often don't have the IT infrastructure needed to participate in e-markets; some have almost no computer systems at all. Benson advises e-market owners to pay for any new gear that suppliers need. Owners should also pay for consultants — or lend their own IT people — to install it. This will help smooth political feathers and coax suppliers to participate, he says. Plus, it will help make the exchange successful, or more "liquid," with many buyers and sellers.

Meanwhile, exchange owners must overcome other political issues. Most critical, says Roentgen, is explaining just how the new electronic process benefits suppliers. "If exchange ownership is dominated by buyers only, then this is merely a year 2000 update to the decades-old practice of squeezing the supply chain," he says.

For example, Covisint, the e-marketplace owned by the Big Three automakers, will have a tough time convincing suppliers to use the site, Roentgen says. "If it's just a way to get competitors to reveal their pricing, there's not much value in it for suppliers," he says. Indeed, in a countermove, six major auto parts suppliers, including Delphi Automotive Systems Corp. and TRW Inc., recently announced their own e-market. It's expected to go live this year. **ROI**

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY JOHN WEBER

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1 January/February 2001

ADVERTISING CLOSE: Nov. 29, 2000

- New Economy, Old Metrics? Recasting Technology ROI to Fit New E-Business Models

- Why Sales Force Automation Fails: Tough Talk from Top Practitioners of the World's (Second) Oldest Profession

- The IT Skeptic: The Perils of Getting the Truth about Tech Spending from Your CIO

2 March/April 2001

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- Why Wall Street's Killer Companies Bother to Nurture High-Tech Creativity

3 May/June 2001

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- Death to Technobabble! High-Tech Plain Speaking for the Board of Directors

- Techno Forecast: What the Age of Wireless Really Means to Your Bottom Line

- 5 Ways to Resolve Internal Conflicts Over E-Business Strategy

EDITORIAL CALENDAR

PHOTOGRAPHS: BOZENA CANNIZZARO/FPG (TOP), PIERRE-YVES GOAVEC (LEFT)

Rates & Specifications

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